

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Roundup: Uber drivers strike for wages, respect and a union
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 21 MAY 27, 2019

Democrat witch hunt against Trump attacks workers' rights

BY TERRY EVANS

The Democrats' continuing witch hunt aimed at driving President Donald Trump from office is a danger to the rights and struggles of working people. It undermines constitutional rights and protections, attempts to criminalize what are political differences, and sets precedents the bosses and their government will use to attack the rights of workers, their unions and vanguard political organizations.

It's not Trump's foreign policy in defense of U.S. imperialism that bothers the Democrats and liberals. They are not demanding U.S. hands off Venezuela and Cuba, or Iran and Korea. Nor is it his anti-working-class policies here at home, however much they howl about them.

Above all, they hate Trump because his election signaled a deep sense among millions of working people that capitalism's crisis today means their lives and their future are in jeopardy. These work-

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US hands off Venezuela! US hands off Cuba!

US rulers say 'all options open' against Venezuela



Militant/Baskaran Appu

Despite defeat of U.S.-backed coup attempt, Washington continues to threaten Venezuela, and also Cuba. In Sydney, Australia, opponents of U.S. intervention join May 5 march.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Washington is continuing its bipartisan push for the overthrow of the Venezuelan government, backing the opposition's self-proclaimed president, Juan Guaidó, and saying all options, includ-

ing a direct U.S. military intervention, are still "on the table."

At the same time the U.S. rulers are tightening the economic screws on Cuba — even threatening a "complete embargo" — on the slanderous pretext that Cuban revolutionaries are responsible for "propping up" the government of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

After Guaidó initiated a failed coup outside an army base April 30, accompanied by a handful of National Guard defectors, the Maduro government stripped the immunity of a half-dozen members of the opposition-controlled

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ACLU, National Lawyers Guild back 'Militant' fight against ban

BY JANET POST

Even though the Florida state prison system's Literature Review Committee knows that the *Militant* appeals every attempt to ban the paper, the committee violated its own rules to rush and uphold the impoundment of two issues before the paper had a chance to appeal.

The committee upheld the ban on issue no. 15 on April 17, five days before the *Militant* received written notification, and the ban on issue no. 17 on May 1, just one day after. The *Militant*'s lawyer, David Goldstein, has filed appeals, calling for both decisions to be reversed.

The fight against this censorship is important for the rights of workers behind bars and for all working people.

Why are committee members in such a rush to uphold censorship? Do they think that by moving quickly, it will be

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Washington sends carrier fleet to Mideast, threatens Iran

BY SETH GALINSKY

Millions of workers in the U.S. know from bitter experience what it means when the capitalist rulers discuss dispatching more cannon fodder to the Middle East.

News accounts report a meeting of White House national security personnel May 9 discussed "updating" a plan

SWP CAMPAIGN: 'US HANDS OFF IRAN!'

to send tens of thousands more troops to the Persian Gulf to counter any hostile moves by Tehran.

Washington is ratcheting up its economic sanctions on Iran even tighter, in what the State Department calls an "unprecedented maximum pressure campaign."

"Washington's new sanctions and

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Join in effort to go over the top in 'Militant', books, fund drive!



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Samir Hazboun, left, SWP candidate for Kentucky lieutenant governor, and Ned Measel, right, talk with Iln Green in Louisville May 11. Campaign supporters ask readers to join in stepped-up effort to meet goals for subscriptions, books and Militant Fighting Fund in full by May 28.

BY TERRY EVANS

"There is no hospital for a woman to go to give birth in Ward 7," in Washington, D.C., nursing student

BRING DRIVE HOME! — See editorial page 9

Makida Yanbo told Socialist Workers Party campaigners Glova Scott and Arlene Rubinstein as they knocked on the door of her apartment April 29. "But

where the rich live there are several."

"We joined protests by nurses against the closure of Providence last year, the most recent hospital shut down in D.C.," Scott said. "The SWP demands universal, government-funded health care, from cradle to grave, as a right."

The SWP opposes the White House's recent push to cut back the government Medicare program that millions of working people depend on.

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US-China rulers' trade dispute part of broader rivalry in Pacific

BY ROY LANDERSEN

President Donald Trump levied steeper tariffs on \$200 billion worth of goods and took steps to impose taxes on nearly all Chinese imports, as five months of trade talks between Washington and Beijing are nearing an end. Three days later Beijing announced its own levies on nearly \$60 billion of U.S. goods.

Both governments still say they want an agreement. Trump announced May 13 he and Chinese President Xi Jinping would meet face to face during the June

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—On the picket line, p. 5—

Amid construction boom, crane collapse in Seattle kills 4 people
Cedars-Sinai hospital workers picket over staffing, conditions

Brutality of British rule in India reflected in Amritsar massacre

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — On April 13, 1919, troops of the British Empire’s colonial Indian Army fired on thousands of unarmed protesters in Amritsar, capital of the Punjab. The turkey shoot lasted without pause for 10 minutes leaving hundreds dead and thousands injured. Commanding Officer Gen. Reginald Dyer then ordered all Indians to stay off the streets for 24 hours, preventing any aid from getting to the wounded.

A reign of terror ensued. Public floggings, mass arrests, prisoners bound and caged unprotected in the sun, planes bombing workers in the fields, electricity and water supply cut from homes, and curfews and press censorship were authorized by Punjab Lt. Gov. Michael O’Dwyer under martial law granted by King George V’s Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford.

This massacre was one of the most deadly in the couple hundred years British capital held sway worldwide. It is being commemorated in India and the U.K. with exhibits, films, music, poetry readings and talks — in Amritsar, Delhi, London and Manchester. Materials include books, contemporary documents, photos and eyewitness accounts.

The exhibit launch in London featured a film of photos of the mobilizations of masses of Indian working people that preceded the massacre. Their demonstrations and strikes were fueled by wartime famine and postwar inflation and shortages; job cuts arising from a slump in the textile industry; new taxes; attacks on Hindu religious practices and threats to Muslim holy sites; and so-

called anti-terror legislation — the Rowlatt Acts — that authorized detention for two years without trial and searches without warrant.

A nationwide strike on April 6, 1919, shut down the Punjab. The rebellion deepened after the arrests and detentions of some of its prominent leaders. For a few days a 50-member People’s Committee held power in the Punjabi city of Lahore.

British rulers’ ‘divide and rule’

This united struggle by working people — Hindu, Muslim and Sikh — terrified the empire’s rulers. From 18th century exploitation under the East India Company through direct rule imposed in 1858, to the massacre, and then on to the World War II government of Winston Churchill, the British colonial rulers’ watchword had been “divide and rule.” This guided how they inflamed religious antagonisms to split the country between India and Pakistan when mass struggles forced them to cede power after the second imperialist world war, in an effort to exploit their continuing economic interests in the region.

The revolt by Indian workers and peasants, described by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in *First Indian War of Independence, 1857-1859*, had made London fearful of any moves to fight against their colonial rule. Their fear was deepened by the 1917 Russian Revolution, which gave hope to millions throughout the colonial world, and the founding of the Communist International — a month before the Amritsar massacre — aimed



Above, Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Above, visitors at Nehru Centre in London April 12 view Amritsar massacre exhibit. One photo, right, shows the “Crawling Lane” in Amritsar where Indians were forced by British colonial soldiers to crawl on their hands and knees following the massacre.



The Partition Museum, Amritsar

at fostering the construction of revolutionary parties that could emulate the Bolsheviks by leading workers and farmers to power. A rise of union militancy in Britain, insurgency in other British colonies, including Ireland, and mutinies in the empire’s army fueled by troops demanding to go home intensified the rulers’ trepidation.

“It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd,” Dyer said after leading the massacre, but one of producing a “moral effect” that would ensure submission.

The Manchester exhibit came out of collaboration with the Partition Museum in Amritsar. Manchester Museum Director Esme Ward told the *Militant* that a diverse audience of 500 attended the opening. It included a musical performance by Aziz Ibrahim, formerly of Simply Red and Guns and Roses, who used archive recordings to bring home the length of the shooting. “Museum organizers have a duty to speak the truth about history that is often hidden,” she said.

As the exhibits opened in different cities, they have all featured the infamous “Crawling Lane.” This was a street where an English missionary had been attacked, and any Indians entering there were forced by sol-

diers’ rifle butts and bayonets to crawl on their hands and knees.

Andrés Mendoza, Communist League candidate for the East of England constituency in the European Parliament elections, told the *Militant* that the capitalist rulers in the U.K. have continued to participate in imperialist atrocities worldwide. He pointed to London’s participation in the “turkey shoot” in the 1990-91 Gulf War and the subsequent carnage in the 2003-11 war on Iraq.

“What’s different from 1919 is the U.K. rulers’ decline as a world power,” he said. “The Communist League demands all U.K. and foreign troops should be brought home. That would pay real tribute to working people in India and elsewhere who have been victims of British capitalism’s atrocities — of which Amritsar is a prime example.”

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THE MILITANT

For recognition of Israel and a Palestinian state

The ‘Militant’ calls for Palestinian leaders to recognize state of Israel, and right of Jews worldwide to move there to escape Jew-hatred and anti-Semitic attacks. It calls for Israel’s recognition of a contiguous Palestinian state. This would open the door to common workers’ struggles.



Cement factory in Ashkelon, southern Israel, struck by Hamas missiles May 5.

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Albany forum panel discusses fight against police brutality

BY JACOB PERASSO

ALBANY, N.Y. — “I will never stop fighting for the rights of my children,” Beverly Hoggs told an audience of 50 people at a public meeting here May 4, co-sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum and the Stolen Lives Project. Hoggs is the mother of Jamel Pearson, who had been sentenced to 87 years for selling drugs, a nonviolent offense. “Appealing was very expensive,” she said. “They get us because we don’t have a million-dollar lawyer.”

Hoggs, whose brother was killed by Schenectady police in 1992, was joined on a panel by two fighters whose sons had been killed by cops in New York City. Hawa Bah, whose son Mohamed was fatally shot in 2012 by police who came instead of an ambulance she had called; and Juanita Young, a long-time fighter against police brutality and mother of Malcolm Ferguson who was shot and killed by the police in 2000, both spoke.

Messiah James Cooper, whose nephew was shot by police in Troy, and Samantha Hamlin, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of that city, were also on the panel.

“I never knew the real things going on in America until my son was murdered,” said Bah. New York Police Detective Edwin Mateo was found guilty in 2017 after a civil trial on excessive force in the killing of Bah’s son. The city in March finally agreed to drop efforts to overturn the decision and to pay the Bah family and attorneys \$1.9 million for the killing, registering a hard-fought victory in a five-year-long fight.

“Police beatings and killings are

aimed at the working class as a whole and disproportionately hit workers who are African American. Cop brutality is a necessary part of capitalist exploitation,” Hamlin told the forum. “Its role is to intimidate and punish workers — alongside the entire criminal ‘justice’ system of the cops, courts, plea-bargain system and its prisons.

“Cop brutality and killings will not end until working people can take power and organize society on a whole different footing — one based on human solidarity and not profit,” she said.

Help take ‘Militant’, books, fund drive over the top!

Continued from front page

And the party counterposes its call for health *care* as a right to all the various insurance schemes peddled by Democratic and Republican politicians that treat health care as a commodity.

Their schemes — from the so-called Green New Deal to “Medicare for All” — ensure the provision of health care for working people remains an insurance plan that rations care while assuring hospital, insurance and pharmaceutical bosses continue to reap profits. “I am completing my exams later this month, when can you come back to talk more?” Yanbo asked after getting a subscription to the *Militant* and the book *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* from the socialist campaigners.

“Whenever you’re ready,” Scott said. The book is one of hundreds offered at a 20% discount by the SWP and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

“More than a newspaper article is able to do, books explain in greater depth, and with more examples, why rule by the capitalist families and their cutthroat profit system is at the root of the problems working people confront,” SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes writes in *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*. “How different layers of the working population are exploited by wage slavery and by the ruinous burdens of debt slavery. Why the capitalist rulers and the upper middle class and professionals who serve their interests consider all working people ‘deplorable.’”

Militant Fighting Fund

There are two weeks left in the seven-week drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and revolutionary books and raise \$115,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund. The party’s campaigning at workers’ doorsteps in cities, towns and rural lanes is at the heart of efforts to meet working people and introduce the SWP.

The Militant Fighting Fund received some \$15,000 from contributors this week, a step forward.



Panel at May 4 public meeting against police brutality in Albany, New York, co-sponsored by Militant Labor Forum and Stolen Lives Project. From left, Samantha Hamlin, Juanita Young, Hawa Bah, Beverly Hoggs (speaking), Jacob Perasso (chair) and Messiah James Cooper.

This brings the fund total to \$71,461, about \$10,000 short of where we wanted to be. A step-up in the final two weeks is needed to raise almost \$44,000 to hit the \$115,000 goal by May 28. The annual fund is the foundation of the paper’s budget, making it possible to respond to important events in world politics and cover fights by working people. Join the effort! You can contribute online at www.themilitant.com.

“All the wealth of this country was built on the backs of working people. How much can a back take before it breaks?” Ibn Green, a sewer worker in Louisville, Kentucky, asked Samir Hazboun, the SWP candidate for Kentucky lieutenant governor. Hazboun and campaign supporter Ned Measel had called at his home.

Hazboun explained why a socialist revolution in the U.S. was necessary and possible. He described his recent participation in the International May Day Brigade to Cuba, where working people waged a revolutionary struggle to oust the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959, take their destiny into their own hands and overturn capitalist rule.

The SWP is running candidates nationwide to present an independent working-class program, on the road to bring a workers and farmers government to power.

“I like what you guys are saying,” said Green. He bought *The First and Second Declarations of Havana* by Cuban leader Fidel Castro, adopted at million-strong assemblies of the Cuban

people in 1960 and 1962. “The duty of every revolutionist,” Castro explains, “is to make the revolution,” not “sit in the doorways of their houses to wait for the corpse of imperialism to pass by.” Green said he hoped to attend a Militant Labor Forum called by the Louisville SWP to oppose Washington’s recent war threats against Venezuela and Cuba.

The party and sister Communist Leagues organized similar forums and initiated or joined protests demanding U.S. hands off Venezuela and Cuba.

Join SWP members in completing these drives in full and on time! Contact the branch nearest you, listed on page 8.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ILLINOIS

Chicago
The Mideast and the Jewish Question: Acting on the Communist Program Today: U.S. Imperialism Did Lose the Cold War. Speaker: Steve Clark, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., May 18. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$10 dinner, \$5 program. 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

NEW YORK

New York
Why Uber, Lyft, Taxi and Other Drivers Need One Union for All Drivers. Speaker: Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., May 19, 5 p.m. Donation: \$5. 307 W. 36th St., 13th floor. Tel: (646) 434-8117.

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Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund						
April 6 - May 28 (week five)						
Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Received
UNITED STATES						
Albany	65	34	65	43	\$5,600	\$3,280
Atlanta	70	49	70	66	\$9,750	\$5,829
Chicago	85	76	110	104	\$11,400	\$7,757
Dallas	40	23	40	19	\$2,500	\$755
Lincoln	14	10	16	12	\$250	\$197
Los Angeles	85	66	185	180	\$10,800	\$6,322
Louisville	50	22	50	39	\$2,800	\$2,656
Miami	25	12	25	14	\$3,500	\$1,550
N. New Jersey	40	30	50	63	\$3,500	\$3,045
New York	80	42	80	96	\$14,000	\$8,500
Oakland	70	57	70	106	\$13,000	\$10,401
Philadelphia	25	15	25	27	\$3,000	\$750
Pittsburgh	15	5	15	7	\$1,200	\$300
Seattle	70	48	95	98	\$10,000	\$5,783
Twin Cities	35	22	35	31	\$4,750	\$3,246
Washington, DC	40	25	40	54	\$5,000	\$3,732
Other					\$1,200	\$1,200
Total U.S.	809	536	971	959	\$102,250	\$65,303
Prisoners	25	28	0	0	\$0	\$0
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	50	35	90	87	\$2,500	\$950
Manchester	35	21	45	36	\$1,300	\$161
Total U.K.	85	56	135	123	\$3,800	\$1,111
CANADA	70	34	80	63	\$8,200	\$2,725
NEW ZEALAND	20	13	20	15	\$3,400	\$1,897
AUSTRALIA	25	22	35	39	\$500	\$425
Total	1,034	689	1,241	1,199	\$118,150	\$71,461
SHOULD BE	1,050	750	1,050	750	\$115,000	\$81,650

New York City Hall moves to slash funds for public libraries

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK — Mayor Bill de Blasio announced in April the city plans to slash \$16 million in funding for public libraries in 2020. The cuts will mean another round of reduced hours and staffing here. This won't only hit employees, but add to the burden on all working people, who depend more than ever on an array of programs, computer services and activities — as well as for books, music and videos — offered by the libraries.

Over the last decade, Democratic and Republican administrations alike at all levels have curtailed or eliminated public and school libraries in cities and rural counties across the country. In Chicago only one quarter of public schools have librarians. Most city libraries in Kern County, California, are open just two or three days a week. Similar conditions are more and more the norm.

Threats of more closures and further defunding loom as government officials and capitalist politicians blackmail workers with the fake choice to either accept tax hikes or face cuts and layoffs in public services.

“The capitalist rulers don't need public libraries,” said Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City public advocate. “They don't need workers to be educated. They only need us to be obedient, and, over time, to lose any desire to broaden our cultural horizons and see ourselves as actors on the stage of history.”

A conquest of the class struggle

Public libraries were a conquest of the class struggle. They were conquered as community centers and public spaces for reading, study, and formal and informal meetings. Besides books, they provide cultural and educational programs, especially in working-class communities. They offer a confidential place for free access to ideas, without fear of censure from relatives, teachers or others.

In the midst of the current economic and social crisis battering working people, and the shuttering of city employment services, public libraries and librarians have taken on crucial social functions like helping workers seek jobs, housing, and health and social services — including increasingly scarce mental health and drug addiction treatment.

Library closures in rural areas eliminate what is often the only access to free internet services. This is also true in working-class neighborhoods in cities. Students without internet go to libraries to study and use a computer. Not having

a quiet place to study and read at home because families are forced to share small apartments as rents soar, makes libraries a crucial refuge.

Nearly 9,000 workers imprisoned in New York City jails — most of whom haven't been convicted of anything — have little or no access to books or periodicals. This is common in prisons across the country. Access by prisoners to productive educational material that can break isolation, and can lead to more solidarity and revolutionary activity is a right all workers should defend.

The origin of the New York Public Library system dates back to the last quarter of the 19th century, as demand for better conditions — including rest, study and recreation — grew among workers.

Women who were entering the garment industry in throngs helped lead the way. They saw the value of reading, public lectures and other cultural activities, and had less access than men.

One group of women in a Grace Church sewing class set up free libraries and reading rooms in rented locations around the city beginning in 1879, proving it was possible. This gave impetus to the fight for free public libraries.

Eventually, as they expanded, these independent libraries merged, leading to consolidation of a single free public system in 1901.

In 1913, Vladimir Lenin, central leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, wrote about the revolutionary implications of the New York Public Library system. He said it made “boundless libraries available, not to a guild of scholars, professors and other such specialists, but to the masses, to the crowd, to the mob!”

The fight for universal and lifetime education for all is a central demand of the working class movement.

“Learning as a lifetime experience — I cannot think of a better reason to

Working class is the defender of learning and culture



Cankaya Municipality News Center

When long-time reader Ray Parsons sent us the clipping that this article is based on, he commented it “illustrates that yes, it's the working class that is the real defender of learning and culture. A point that the Socialist Workers Party and the *Militant* often make.” He's absolutely right.

Sanitation workers in Ankara, Turkey, have been gathering discarded books from the streets and out of the trash. First, they set up a lending library for workers and their families. As the collection grew, they decided to build a library in an old brick factory that serves as the headquarters of Ankara's sanitation department in the Cankaya district. As word spread, other working people in the area began donating books. Above, sign says, “Book Reading Room.”

The library was opened to the public in September 2017. It has over 6,000 titles, including literature, nonfiction, scientific research, economics and children's books. And the building now includes a lounge for reading, playing chess, sipping a cup of tea or getting a haircut.

“Before, I wished that I had a library in my house. Now we have a library here,” Serhat Baytemur, a 32-year-old sanitation worker, told the media.

“On one hand, there were those who were leaving these books on the streets. On the other hand, others were looking for these books,” said Cankaya Mayor Alper Tasdelen. The city hired a full-time worker to manage the library. The sanitation workers' library loans books to schools, educational programs and to workers behind bars. “Village schoolteachers from all over Turkey are requesting books,” Tasdelen said.

— JANET POST

make a socialist revolution,” says Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning under Capitalism*. “And

we have the living example of the Cuban Revolution to show how it's possible to start down that road” to get rid of capitalism, begin transforming humanity, and build human solidarity.

Washington sends carrier to Mideast, threatens Tehran

Continued from front page

threats against Iran only make things worse for working people there and in the region. The U.S. rulers only aim is defending their imperialist interests in the Middle East,” Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of San Francisco, said May 13. “Working people in the U.S. and around the world should be on their guard, and demand U.S. hands off Iran! End the sanctions!”

The U.S. rulers' goal is to force Tehran to accept greater restrictions on its nuclear program and to reign in Iranian “proxy” forces in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and the Gaza Strip.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said May 11 the U.S. economic sanctions are “unprecedented in the history of our Islamic Revolution,” and are causing deep economic problems.

It's working people who are forced to bear the burden. Prices for basic necessities have risen as much as 60 percent over the last year, despite government subsidies for food and electricity.

Washington has been increasing the pressure for a year, since President Donald Trump withdrew from the 2015 U.S.-Iran nuclear agreement signed by Barack Obama, saying it didn't go far enough.

In November last year, Washington reimposed sanctions on oil imports from Iran but granted eight governments temporary waivers. In April, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that the waivers would not be renewed. They expired May 2.

On May 3 Washington set new limits on Iran's nuclear activities, imposing sanctions on Iranian export of heavy water and surplus enriched uranium. Less than a week later it imposed sanctions on Iran's metal exports.

And on May 5 the White House announced the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group was heading to the Arab-Persian Gulf “to send a clear and unmistakable message to the Iranian Regime.” Administration officials claimed it was in response to unspecified threats by Iranian forces. The deployment was part of the regular rotation of U.S. naval forces, but Washington exploited it to threaten Tehran.

Washington continues to squeeze

“Any attack on U.S. interests will be met with unrelenting force,” Gen. Frank McKenzie, commander of the U.S. Central Command, said May 8. He added, “Make no mistake, we are not seeking a fight with the Iranian regime.”

On May 7, Pompeo called off a

planned trip to Germany and went to Iraq. He spent four hours meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi, Iraqi President Barham Salih and other officials, as part of the U.S. attempt to increase the pressure on Tehran.

He also went to Brussels for a meeting May 13 with officials of some European countries and met May 14 with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi.

In early April Trump designated Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization, the first time a government military force has been placed on the list. The Revolutionary Guards are a key part of the counterrevolutionary bourgeois clerical regime's moves to extend its influence in the region.

On May 12, Amirali Hajizadeh, head of the Revolutionary Guards air division, responded provocatively, saying an aircraft carrier with thousands of troops “was a serious threat for us in the past, but now it is a target and the threats have switched to opportunities.”

But a spokesman for Major Gen. Hossein Salami, the head of the Revolutionary Guards, played down the threat of military confrontation. “The Americans have started a psychological war,” he said, “because the comings and goings of their military is a normal matter.”

Correction

The article “Thousands Demand Licenses, Amnesty at May Day Rallies,” in the May 20 issue incorrectly said that the Madison, Wisconsin, rally was sponsored by Cosecha. It was sponsored by Voces de la Frontera.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced-rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked “Prisoners' Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Are you involved in a union organizing drive or strike? Brought solidarity to fellow workers on the picket line? Let us know! Send articles, photos and letters to themilitant@mac.com or through our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Amid construction boom, crane collapse in Seattle kills 4 people

SEATTLE — On May 1 dozens of construction workers here marched on their lunch hour to Google's new "campus" on downtown Mercer Street, where two workers and two others were killed when a crane tower came down April 27. Ironworkers Travis Corbet and Andrew Yoder were working on disassembling the massive crane when it came apart and fell to the street, killing them, hitting six cars and killing Seattle Pacific University freshman Sarah Wong and 71-year-old Alan Justad, a retired city worker.

The workers laid a metal cross with two hardhats fastened to it at the site, along with a pair of bouquets for the other two victims. The cause is under investigation.

In addition to why the crane came down, area residents and others want to know why Mercer Street, a busy thoroughfare in the area connecting to Interstate 5, wasn't closed to traffic.

The construction boom here, where Google, Amazon and other tech behemoths are expanding at a fever pitch, means that the city has more cranes running every day than any other city in the U.S. Property values are soaring and workers are being pushed out of area housing.

The South Lake Union area where the Google office is being built is the site of a lot of the construction. Paul Allen, a founder of Microsoft, bought up much of the area years ago and proposed the city turn it into a park, but the proposal was shot down. Amazon then moved in to buy up a bunch of the land to build its headquarters.

Other companies that have built in the area are Facebook and Uber. A lot of the construction, like the Google office, is developed by Allen's real estate company, Vulcan.

Construction is one of the most dangerous occupations for workers. Over 20% of the 4,674 workers killed in private industry in 2017 were in

construction. On average, the government reports, 44 people are killed working on or with construction cranes every year.

Some people have tried to blame the two workers, saying video of the crane coming down indicate bolts in the crane had been removed too early.

Workers here point to a different culprit. When he was interviewed at the annual May Day march in Seattle, Art Francisco, from Carpenters Local 30, told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* that the two workers killed during the crane's collapse were working past eight hours, something emblematic of the frenzied construction going on in the city.

There needs to be more safety and less pressure on the workers to meet production schedules, he said.

— Edwin Fruit

Cedars-Sinai hospital workers picket over staffing, conditions

LOS ANGELES — Chanting "Hey, Cedars, you're no good. Treat your workers like you should!" hundreds of hospital workers held an all-day picket line at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center here May 1. Many took the day off or came during breaks at work. Built by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor as one of the May Day actions this year, workers from other hospitals joined in picketing.

The contract of the 1,800 Cedars-Sinai workers expired March 31. They are members of the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West. Staffing levels, health care and conditions on the job are key issues.

"Everyone knows how Cedars-Sinai treats celebrities and powerful people, but few may know how the hospital treats the workers who care for those patients every day," Adolfo Morales, a clinical partner at Cedars, told the *Militant*. "We want a voice in delivering quality care, but the hospital is threatening us for speaking out about understaffing or other patient care concerns."

Hospital bosses are demanding the

Farmers organize aid for flood-stricken Nebraskans



Militant/Dan Fein

DELAN, Wis. — While federal and state officials continue to drag their feet delivering help to those hit hard by March's flooding in Nebraska and Iowa, farmers and others in rural communities in the Midwest are organizing solidarity and aid.

Stacey Koenen, who works at the Whiskey Ranch Bar and Grill here, read an online post about fundraising efforts being organized for flood-stricken Nebraska farmers and decided to get something going in the area.

The owners of the bar agreed. "For two weeks starting April 6, farmers, workers and small businesses in the farming area dropped off donations of farm and cleaning supplies to the bar, more than enough to fill a 53-foot trailer," Koenen told the *Militant*.

Three other local businesses — Wood Products, Gifford Tree Service and Royal Basket Trucks — donated use of a semitruck and large bins to hold what had been donated. Whiskey Ranch "organized a guest bartender night April 13, where area farmers poured the drinks, raising more than \$1,800 for fuel for the trip to Winslow, Nebraska, and back," Koenen said.

Terry "Chop" Nelson, a third-generation farmer and truck driver, set out April 24, accompanied by Koenen. Above, from left, volunteers Travis Eger, Nelson and Kelly Eger load up the supplies.

— JOHN HAWKINS

right to fire workers who speak publicly about understaffing or bloated executive compensation.

"Over the years I have seen two sides of Cedars-Sinai," Willie Gladly, a housekeeper at Cedars for over 10 years, told the *Militant* after speaking at the rally. "I got active in the union early last year. I wanted to know more about the union and the contract. I think more workers are getting involved."

"Workers are getting more injuries from lifting patients," Leticia Venzon, a clinical partner, and certified nursing assistant for 30 years, said. "We don't

have the time to take care of everyone because there aren't enough workers."

Dennis Richter, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Los Angeles City Council District 12, joined the action. "I support your fight," he told picketers. "Workers here, like workers around the world, are facing the carnage brought on by the capitalist system. Acting independently to fight for our rights is the road forward."

— Deborah Liatos

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 30, 1994

A major confrontation is looming in the two-year war between members of the United Auto Workers and the bosses at Caterpillar, Inc. The entire labor movement has a stake in its outcome.

On May 16 workers at the giant earth moving equipment company's Moss-ville, Illinois, plant walked off the job after the company suspended 30 workers for hanging balloons with union slogans in the factory. Another 30 workers were indefinitely suspended for attending a labor rally in Peoria, Illinois. Fifteen thousand unionists from across the country participated in that rally to show solidarity with the fighting Cat workers.

Two years ago UAW members waged a five-month strike. When management threatened to call in scabs, rank and file workers poured onto the picket lines. They only returned to work under orders from top union officials.



May 30, 1969

A victory for the anti-Vietnam War movement and for constitutional rights was achieved May 20 when Army authorities at Ft. Jackson, S.C., announced they were dropping their planned prosecution of the last three of eight antiwar GIs. The case is probably without parallel in U.S. military history.

The eight victorious servicemen, whom the Army originally intended to imprison had been guilty of no other "crime" than insisting on exercising the constitutional right of free speech to discuss and express their opposition to U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

While the GIs' outspoken opposition to the war was hardly to the liking of the brass, the men exercised sound judgment in obeying all the rules of military life and simply insisting on exercising rights guaranteed them by the U.S. Constitution.



May 27, 1944

As soon as the resentment of the workers, aggravated by the deliberate stalling tactics of the War Labor Board, erupts into open resistance against the provocative acts of management, the whole machinery of the federal government is mobilized as a strikebreaking weapon in the service of Big Business. That is the real significance of the farcical "seizure" of the Montgomery Ward plant at Chicago and the Ward subsidiary, the Hummer Manufacturing Company, at Springfield, Illinois. The Roosevelt administration acted only after the workers, their patience exhausted by the interminable run-around of the WLB, struck the plants.

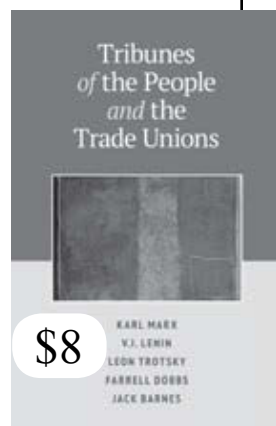
The workers were forced to strike in order to defend the existence of their unions against the open shop drive instituted by J. P. Morgan and Company which controls Montgomery Ward.

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Roundup: Uber drivers strike for wages, respect and a union

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

On the eve of Uber's much heralded first public stock offering May 10, Uber and Lyft drivers in at least 10 U.S. cities, plus several cities in Australia, the United Kingdom and Brazil, shut off their apps and joined protests May 8.

Though modest in size the strikes show that workers at the two giant e-hail companies are looking for ways to fight for higher pay and respect. They point to the need for one union for all drivers, from app-based, Yellow Cab and other car services.

A central part of the business "strategy" of the app-based companies is to convince drivers they are independent "owner-operators," contractors, not workers who need a union. That way all the costs from car maintenance or rental, to gas, tickets, insurance and health care are on the driver, not the companies.

Some drivers "own" their car. Some rent from fleet owners. The bosses benefit by pitting drivers against each other in myriad ways including Yellow Taxi against app-based. An important challenge drivers are discussing is how to overcome these divisions and why they can't rely on government regulations.

Among the drivers' demands are better and more "transparent" pay, instead of it being "a big cloud of mystery," and an end to arbitrary deactivations — the Uber equivalent of being suspended or fired. There are some 3 million Uber drivers around the world. There are more than 100,000 e-hail drivers in New York City and a similar number in Los Angeles, as well as thousands of "traditional" taxi drivers in those cities.

Much of the capitalist media stood behind the Uber bosses' need to squeeze more out of the drivers if they're ever going to turn a profit. "Strike All You Want. Uber Won't Pay a Living Wage," proclaimed a column by *New York Times* editorial board member Sarah Jeong. Her column was subtitled, "The Choice is Between Underpaying Drivers and Replacing Them With Robots."

USA Today headlined its article the day of the strike, "Here's Why the Uber, Lyft Protests Might Not Even Work," and pushed Uber's claim there was no

impact on their daily operations.

But on its first day of public trading May 10 Uber shares fell over 7% below its \$45 offering price, a "rare setback for a high profile IPO," noted the *Wall Street Journal*.

Several hundred Uber and Lyft drivers and supporters picketed Uber headquarters in San Francisco May 8. "I'm making less than minimum wage working from 7 p.m. to 5 in the morning, with no overtime pay," driver Erica Mighetto told the *Militant*. Drivers said the movement is just getting going, and more workers will see they can fight together.

"I am recommending a union for all these drivers. They think we are slaves. We are not slaves," said driver Hasheem Shah.

"If we fight together they can't fire all of us," said Gary Branson. "We need benefits. Unity is key."

In Los Angeles, hundreds of Uber and Lyft drivers shut off their apps for 24 hours and picketed the airport throughout the day. "We're fighting for living wages," Karim Bayumi said on the picket line. "For you to be taking your property and paying 90% of your expenses and getting 50% or less of the costs of the rides — this was not the agreement when I was hired."

Deactivating drivers

In Atlanta, the recently formed Rideshare Drivers United Georgia held two rallies — one at the Uber hub and another at the Lyft hub, each attended by about 50 drivers and supporters. Several denounced how the companies arbitrarily deactivate drivers' apps. "If a customer gives the driver a one-star rating, the company will deactivate you," said Seiko Conte, who has been driving for Uber since 2016. "There's no appeal, no giving your side of the story."

Dozens of Uber and Lyft drivers in Chicago, and some cab drivers, held a picket line and press conference at City Hall. "App drivers, livery drivers and cab drivers are all trying to make a living," taxi driver Nnamdi Uwazie told protesters. "We need to stand together for the drivers, not the corporations." Uwazie is a member of Cab Drivers United, which is affiliated with the American Federation of State,



Militant/Deborah Liatos
As part of national strike, Uber and Lyft drivers in Los Angeles shut off their apps for 24 hours May 8 and picketed at the airport. "We're fighting for living wages," driver Karim Bayumi said.

County and Municipal Employees.

A "Driver Speak Out" at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in Washington state of some 60 people was sponsored by Teamsters Local 117 and the App-Based Drivers Association, which is affiliated with the union. "The company says, 'If you don't like it, then leave,'" driver Walter Ellis said. "I say, if you don't like it, then change it!"

In New York more than 200 drivers joined protests at Uber and Lyft's headquarters in Long Island City — one in the morning sponsored by the Independent Drivers Guild and an afternoon action organized by the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. Most of the drivers there are immigrants from around the world, including Bhutan, Burkina Faso, China, India, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia and Tibet.

Despite the bosses' attempts to pit drivers against each other, Yellow Cab and limousine drivers came to give solidarity at the protests.

"I have no medical insurance. Uber gives us nothing," Reza Saifan driver told the *Militant* at the afternoon protest. He has to take a month off for medical treatment. "No sick pay. How am I supposed to pay my bills with no income?"

'We're employees, not contractors'

"Uber must stop calling us independent contractors," he added. "I don't like it. They must call us their employees because we work for them. And we should not have to work more than eight hours to have more time to rest and take care of our families. To make one union, it makes lots of sense."

At a rally in Melbourne, Australia, drivers chanted, "Uber, Uber, you must listen. We will break your algorithm!" Drivers also protested in Sydney and Brisbane.

In the United Kingdom, drivers in several cities, including London, Birmingham and Glasgow shut off their apps from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and picketed at Uber's British headquarters in East London. "We have big potential power. We are more than 100,000 private hire drivers in London. If all of us take action it will have a big impact," driver Ahmed Hussein told the *Militant*. Drivers also joined the one-day strike in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Uber and Lyft are keeping fares low and foregoing profits for the time being, hoping to drive each other and their other rivals out of business. In 2018 Uber reported a loss of \$3 billion on revenue of \$11.3 billion and its debt reached nearly \$8 billion.

Lyft launched its own IPO in March, but their stock has continued to fall. Investors are skeptical of the ability of the e-hail companies to turn a profit.

"As we aim to reduce Driver incentives to improve our financial performance, we expect Driver dissatisfaction will generally increase," Uber admitted in its filing with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission.

That's for sure.

Betsey Stone in San Francisco, Deborah Liatos in Los Angeles, Janice Lynn in Atlanta, Naomi Craine in Chicago, Edwin Fruit in Seattle, and Dag Tirsén in London contributed to this article.

Socialist Workers Party to host June 13-15 Active Workers Conference in Ohio

BY JANET POST

A three-day Active Workers Conference sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party June 13-15 in Oberlin, Ohio, will bring hundreds of workers, youth and other participants together from across the U.S. and around the world, active in political struggles, to learn from talks, classes and informal discussion.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party in the U.S. The conference will celebrate the SWP's revolutionary continuity back to that founding, based on the Bolshevik Party and its leadership of the Russian Revolution in 1917.

SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes will give the main politi-

cal report, "Party and Program Are One," on the opening afternoon of the conference.

A talk the next day by Steve Clark, a member of the party's Political Committee, will be on "The Middle East and the Jewish Question: Acting on the Communist Program."

There will be two panel discussions focused on the work of the party, "Tribunes of the People and the Turn to Industry" and "Our Election Campaigns Drive the Wisconsin Turn." These will focus on how party members speak in the interests of all the exploited and oppressed, helping the party deepen its activity in the working class — from the unions to going door to door in working-class neighborhoods in cities, towns and

Hands off Venezuela, Cuba!

Continued from front page
National Assembly accused of joining the conspiracy.

National Assembly Vice President Edgar Zambrano was arrested May 8. Charges include treason, conspiracy, civil rebellion, criminal association and "continued hatred." At least one other deputy sought refuge in the Argentine Embassy in Caracas to avoid arrest. But the government has so far not attempted to detain Guaidó.

Maduro issued a presidential decree demoting and expelling 55 armed forces officials accused of taking part in the coup attempt, including Division Gen. Manuel Christopher Figueroa, chief of the SEBIN intelligence agency, and National Guard Lt. Col. Ilich Sánchez. He was filmed with Guaidó April 30 calling on other soldiers to "come join us."

Imperialism's crocodile tears

U.S. officials have been crying crocodile tears for the people of Venezuela, who face the impact of the deep capitalist economic and social crisis. Washington hoped that the shortage of affordable food, lack of medicine, violent crime, skyrocketing inflation and frequent power outages would drive working people into the pro-imperialist opposition's arms.

While the support for the Maduro government has fallen substantially, most working people remain suspicious of Guaidó and his gang. They know that the opposition forces defend the interests of the capitalist class and U.S. imperialism. And that U.S. sanctions and intervention make the crisis they face worse.

Guaidó told the Italian daily *La Stampa* May 10 that "if the Americans were to propose a military intervention I would probably accept it." But even many Guaidó supporters oppose a U.S. invasion. "That would spark a civil war," law student Pasqual Paulino told the *Washington Post* at a protest in Caracas May 2.

US invents 20,000 Cuban troops

White House officials try to justify their stepped-up threats against Cuba with the slanderous charge that Cuba has 20,000 armed soldiers in Venezuela.

The liberal *Washington Post*, which shares the Democrats' and Republicans' hostility toward both Venezuela and Cuba, admitted May 2 that it's just not

possible to "hide 20,000 to 25,000 [Cuban] soldiers." In fact, the Cuban volunteers are overwhelmingly doctors and nurses, as well as a smaller number of teachers and sports or dance instructors.

Vice President Mike Pence insisted May 7 that "Cuban agents" control the "military and intelligence services" and that "key decisions about Venezuela's future are as much made in Havana as they are in Caracas."

The purpose of these slanders and outright lies is to justify U.S. imperialist violation of Venezuelan sovereignty and the escalation of the decadeslong U.S. economic war against the Cuban Revolution.

Their threats and preparations are deadly serious. After the coup attempt failed, "U.S. officials have since been more cautious in their predictions of Maduro's swift exit," the *Washington Post* reported May 8. You can be sure they will keep pushing.

Sanctions tightened on Cuba

The U.S. government has begun implementing its latest round of anti-Cuba sanctions, announced April 17, including allowing Title III of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act to go into effect for the first time.

Title III allows U.S. citizens to sue for compensation from any company or individual that profits from the use of "their" property that was nationalized during the early years of the revolution.

U.S. citizens filed suit May 2 against Carnival Corp., on the grounds that the cruise operator was embarking and disembarking passengers on port facilities and waterfront property that their families owned at the time of the revolution.

ExxonMobil Corp. sued two Cuban companies May 2 over oil refineries and service stations nationalized by the revolution in 1960. The oil barons are demanding some \$280 million.

The U.S. moves are aimed at exacerbating the economic challenges in Cuba. On May 10 Cuba's domestic commerce department announced it was rationing eggs, rice, beans and sausages and that state-run stores would also get enough chicken for the public before it can be sold wholesale.

"This is the right response," Cuban tobacco factory worker Lazara Garcia told The Associated Press. "Without this, there'll be hoarders."

In a May 2 statement, Alyson Ken-

May Day brigade volunteers aid farmers in Cuba



Militant
CAIMITO, Cuba — Some 320 members of the May Day brigade to Cuba from 21 countries took part in voluntary labor shoulder to shoulder with farmers here April 24, to boost production. This was one of the activities they joined in during the April 22-May 5 brigade.

"With help from the brigadistas' voluntary labor, our field is now cleared of rocks, brush and debris and is planted with avocado and mango," farmer Rita María Santeestevan told brigade members May 5 at another farm.

Santeestevan, a member of the Cuban Communist Party, gave up her office job seven years ago to begin farming land here in an effort to increase agricultural production. Farm production had fallen sharply after the abrupt decline in aid and favorable trade when the governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe collapsed 1989-91.

"With the deepening U.S. economic war against Cuba we must keep resisting," she said. The U.S. rulers are further tightening the squeeze, claiming Cuba is responsible for the social crisis in Venezuela today.

The largest delegation was from the U.S., some 65 people. Brigade members took part in educational presentations by Cuban leaders; trips to Artemisa, Sancti Spiritus and Trinidad; participation in a celebration organized by a neighborhood Committee for Defense of the Revolution; and joined the May Day march in Havana and a May 2 international solidarity conference of 1,000 sponsored by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers. They discussed the Venezuelan government's defeat of a U.S.-backed coup attempt, the Trump administration's threat of an all-out embargo of Cuba, and the lethal attack on a Jewish synagogue in California.

"I've been interested in the Cuban Revolution and socialism for a while," Nicholas Eddington, a former Comcast installer from Seattle who did a tour of duty in Afghanistan from 2008 to 2014, told the *Militant* May 5. "I wanted to see a workers and farmers government and what the Cuban people have done in 60 years under constant pressure from the U.S. blockade. I can't wait to go back to the U.S. and tell the truth."

— MAGGIE TROWE

Cuban Revolution: Example for all workers

To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End

Fidel Castro, Che Guevara
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Militant/Naomi Craine
Uber, Lyft drivers picket City Hall in Chicago May 8. Sign refers to Dara Khosrowshahi, Uber CEO. "We need to stand together," Nnamdi Uwazie of Cab Drivers United told protesters.

The class struggle is the driving force of US and world history

This week's Books of the Month excerpt is from *The Long View of History*, a pamphlet by George Novack. The author of a number of titles on U.S. working-class history and Marxist philosophy, Novack was a member and leader of the Socialist Workers Party from 1933 until his death in 1992. He also led several defense campaigns for victimized party members and others. This pamphlet explains how revolutionary change is fundamental to social and cultural progress and why the working class struggle to end capitalist exploitation is the only road forward. Copyright © 1960 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY GEORGE NOVACK

In its evolution to our own century, civilized society can be divided into three main epochs: slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. Each of these is marked off by the special way in which the ruling propertied class at the head of the social setup manages to extract the surplus wealth upon which it lives from the laboring mass who directly create it. This entire period covers little more than the past five to six thousand years.

Civilization was ushered in and raised upon direct slavery. The very economic factors that broke up barbarism and made civilized life possible



Cleveland Historical Society

United Auto Workers sit-down strikers occupy GM plant in Cleveland in 1936. In *The Long View of History*, George Novack wrote, "The most valuable social force capitalism has created is the industrial working class," which will lead the coming socialist revolution.

likewise provided the material preconditions for the use of slave labor. The division of labor based upon tending herds, raising crops, mining metals, and fashioning goods for sale enabled the most advanced societies to produce more than the actual laborers required for their maintenance. This made slavery both possible and profitable for the first time. It gave the most powerful stimulus to the predatory appetites of individual possessors of the means of production who strove to acquire and increase their surpluses of wealth. Slave production and ownership became the economic foundation of a new type of social organization, the source of supreme power, prestige, and privileges. And it eventually reshaped the whole structure of civilized life. ...

But if slavery had sufficient reasons for becoming the beginning and basis of ancient civilization, in turn and in time it generated the conditions and forces which would undermine and overthrow it. Once slavery became the predominant form of production either in industry, as in Greece, or in agriculture, as in Rome, it no longer furthered the development of agricultural techniques, craftsmanship, trade, or navigation. The slave empires of antiquity stagnated and disintegrated until after a lapse of centuries they were replaced by two main types of feudal organization: Asiatic and West European.

As the result of a long list of technological and other social advances, merging with a sequence of exceptional historical circumstances, feudalized Europe became the nursery for the next great stage of class society, capitalism. How and why did capitalism originate?

Once money had arisen from the extension of trading several thousand years ago, its use as capital became possible. Merchants could add to their wealth by buying goods cheap and selling them dear; moneylenders and mortgage holders could gain interest on sums advanced on the security of land or other collateral. These practices were common in both slave and feudal societies.

But if money could be used in pre-capitalist times to return more than the original investment, other conditions had to be fulfilled before capitalism could become established as a separate and definite world economic system. The central condition was a special kind of transaction regularly repeated on a growing scale. Large numbers of propertyless workers had to hire themselves to the possessors of money and the other means of production in order to earn a livelihood. ...

The industrial age was launched around the beginning of the nineteenth century with the application of steam power to the first mechanized processes, concentrating large numbers of wage

workers into factories. The capitalist captains of this large-scale industry became masters of the field of production and later of entire countries and continents as their riches, their legions of wage laborers, social and political power, swelled to majestic proportions.

This vigorous, expanding, progressive, confident, competitive stage of industrial capitalism dominated the nineteenth century. It passed over into the monopoly-ridden capitalism of the twentieth century, which has carried all the basic tendencies of capitalism, and especially its most reactionary features, to extremes in economic, political, cultural, and international relations. While the processes of production have become more centralized, more rationalized, more socialized, the means of production and the wealth of the world have become concentrated in giant financial and industrial combines. So far as the capitalist sectors of society are involved, this process has been brought to the point where the capitalist monopolies of a single country, the U.S., dictate to all the rest. ...

In the last century, Marx made a scientific analysis of the workings of the capitalist system which explained how its inner contradictions would bring about its downfall. The revolutions of our own century since 1917 are demonstrating in real life that capitalism is due to be relegated to the museum of antiquities. It is worthwhile to understand the inexorable underlying causes of these developments, which appear so inexplicable and abhorrent to the upholders of the capitalist system.

Capitalism has produced many things, good and bad, in the course of its evolution. But the most vital and valuable of all the social forces it has created is the industrial working class. The capitalist class has brought into existence a vast army of wage laborers, centralized and disciplined, and set it into motion for its own purposes, to make and operate the machines, factories, and all the other production and transportation facilities from which its profits emanate. ...

The struggle between these conflicting social classes is today the dominant and driving force of world and American history, just as the conflict between the bourgeois-led forces against the precapitalist elements was the motivating force of history in the immediately preceding centuries.

May

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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The Militant May 27, 2019

Bring ‘Militant’, books, fund drive home!

Join the final two weeks of our Spring drive to expand the readership of the *Militant* and revolutionary books and help fund the paper!

The *Militant* is a unique voice speaking in the interests of working people. Recent issues raised a call to action to mobilize opposition to Washington’s war threats against Venezuela and Cuba, built May Day demonstrations demanding driver’s licenses for immigrant workers to advance the unity of all working people, urged solidarity with the May 8 strike by Uber and other taxi drivers, and defended the right of workers behind bars to read papers and books of their choice. The paper points working people to actions they can be part of today to fight the attacks of the bosses and their government here and abroad.

It explains that workers can act together in our own common class interests and, through common struggle, transform ourselves. It champions the interests of

all those exploited and oppressed by the dictatorship of capital. And it urges support for Socialist Workers Party candidates campaigning across the country.

Drawing on decades of experience in the course of revolutionary struggles, the hundreds of books being offered at discount explain the root of the problems confronting working people is the rule of the capitalist class. They describe what can be done to build the movement necessary to replace their rule with the power of working people.

These books and the *Militant* need to be widely available. They arm working people to address political questions today and prepare for the revolutionary struggles that lie ahead. Join in our campaign to complete the drive in full and on time. Help win new contributors so the \$115,000 Militant Fighting Fund can go over the top.

Thanks for your help.

Democrat witch hunt attacks workers’ rights

Continued from front page

ers have a growing distrust and hatred for those they call “the political class.” Liberals have a fear — shared broadly by the ruling capitalist families — that over time this will lead to large-scale labor battles and independent working-class political consciousness.

This is the rulers’ real target — to weaken the rights of working people and attack their ability to act politically.

Disregarding the fact that special counsel Robert Mueller’s report — despite all his partisan efforts — found no basis to the charges that Trump’s 2016 campaign had colluded with Moscow, liberals are pushing new charges and fishing expeditions they hope will lead to indictment, impeachment or at least to uncover unseemly material that can cost him reelection.

The House Ways and Means Committee is demanding the release of six years of the president’s tax returns. Trump says no way, they’re my business.

Dovetailing with the congressional moves, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is pushing a state bill that would prevent presidential candidates from getting on the ballot there if they don’t make their tax returns public. This violates basic constitutional protections of the right to privacy. Similar laws are being pushed by liberals in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Rhode Island and elsewhere.

When some of Trump’s older tax returns were released, showing he had lost money, he joked that this only meant he was smart and saved money on his taxes. Millionaire bourgeois politicians like Trump — and like Obama, the Clintons and Bernie Sanders — have an army of accountants and lawyers to doctor their taxes.

But Socialist Workers Party candidates and many other workers oppose efforts by government bureaucrats to pry into their families’ financial affairs. They are nobody’s business.

Democrats, and some Republicans, are also pushing to greatly increase the number of signatures parties have to collect to get on the ballot, as well as moving the deadline for filing to run earlier and earlier, in some cases into the year before the elections! The effect — and intention — of these bills is to make it harder for independent and working-class parties, like the Socialist Workers Party, to get on the ballot.

House Intelligence Committee chief Adam Schiff is seeking to open a new round of “investigation” into the president and others in his administration. He threatens to use Congress’ “inherent contempt” power — which hasn’t been used in nearly a century — on administration officials who refuse to agree to be grilled or to turn over personal material. The “contempt” rule allows Congress to issue sanctions, including imprisonment in the Capitol.

The rulers’ political police

Meanwhile, the Justice Department, headed by Attorney General William Barr, is opening a probe into the FBI’s increasing role as a partisan spy operation against Trump’s 2016 campaign and his administration. This makes Democrats nervous.

“We have to stop using the criminal-justice process as a political weapon,” Barr said May 1, pointing to liberals’ efforts to criminalize political differences between Democrats and Republicans. But the capitalist “justice” system and its FBI political police have been used for decades to target and attack working-class militants and revolutionists like the SWP, with the support of Democrats and Republicans alike. The liberals’ push to do so today gives the rulers greater room to step up these attacks.

The 15-year successful political and legal fight by the Socialist Workers Party against spying and harassment by the FBI and other government agencies helped expose the scope of the rulers’ political police. Both Democratic and Republican administrations back to Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s used the FBI to target the SWP and its participation in the unions, the fight against imperialist war, struggles to overturn Jim Crow segregation and other legal activity.

A 1986 court ruling in the lawsuit detailed the hundreds of informers the FBI sent into the party. It describes 20,000 days worth of wiretaps over two decades and hundreds of burglaries of party offices and homes of SWP members.

When the liberals turn similar methods loose against Trump’s campaign and his presidency, it gives wider sway to political police spying and disruption and increases the danger to the working class. Every attack on constitutional rights will end up being directed against the working class and vanguard groups like the SWP. Working people need to fight every step advanced by liberals and the middle-class left — or anyone else — to undermine our political rights.

ACLU, NLG join ‘Militant’ fight against ban

Continued from front page

harder for the *Militant* to win support for the fight to overturn censorship? If so, they are mistaken.

“The National Lawyers Guild works closely with prison communities and our jailhouse lawyer members to ensure wide dissemination of engaging reading material, and calls for the full distribution of the *Militant* and the rescinding of its impoundment,” Guild President Elena Cohen said May 14.

“We urge the Committee to reverse the rejections at its next meeting and permit Florida prisoners to receive these issues of the *Militant*,” Benjamin Stevenson, staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation Florida, wrote May 6.

The *Militant* is asking workers to get their unions, church groups and others to get letters asking the Literature Review Committee to reverse the bans and send them to the *Militant*.

Florida officials never explain why a *Militant* issue has been banned. Instead, they fill out a generic form claiming that an article encourages activity that could lead to “physical violence,” is a “threat to security ... of the correctional system,” or some other generality.

For issue no. 15, prison officials pointed to the arti-

US-China trade dispute

Continued from front page

28-29 G-20 conference in Japan.

The trade tussle between U.S. imperialism and Chinese capitalists — the world’s two largest economies — has rattled Wall Street investors, worried about a drag on growth and profits worldwide.

U.S. imperialism’s place as the mightiest world power is declining, but it still retains global supremacy, conquered in the second interimperialist blood-bath over seven decades ago. Washington is trying to defend its interests against the long-term challenge by Beijing — from trade and technology to military reach. Rivalry between the two powers is a permanent feature of today’s world.

If the dispute isn’t resolved to its liking, the White House has threatened additional duties on most of Beijing’s remaining exports to the U.S., some \$300 billion worth. The U.S. rulers have the upper hand for now as their \$420 billion trade deficit with China is an advantage in any protracted tariff dispute.

U.S. officials told CNN that Chinese negotiators backtracked on commitments to change Chinese laws to protect foreign investors’ intellectual property and trade secrets, allow more competition with China’s state sector and to stifle their manipulation of China’s currency. Trump said Beijing shouldn’t have tried to “renegotiate deals with the U.S. at the last minute.”

China’s chief trade negotiator, Vice Premier Liu He, said May 10 that agreement could only be reached if the U.S. accepted more realistic targets for Chinese purchases of U.S. goods. He said the text needed to be “balanced” to ensure the “dignity” of both nations.

Many U.S. bosses and bankers back the president’s hardball stance. Trump also has backing from some Democratic Party leaders, like New York Sen. Chuck Schumer, who told him, “Hang tough on China.” And from Richard Trumka, the pro-protectionist president of the AFL-CIO union federation.

Among those hardest hit by the effects of the tariffs are U.S. farmers. Trump says his tough tactics will help them in the long run, and that he will use tariff revenue to boost farm production and income by buying up soybeans and other farm goods and sending them to “starving countries.” But any such subsidies would inevitably end up in the hands of the agribusiness monopolies and big capitalist farmers.

Washington and Beijing are also stepping up competition for naval dominance in the Western Pacific and beyond.

The Chinese military is rapidly modernizing and expanding its navy, closing the gap on Washington’s unchallenged reign over area seaways. The Pentagon is concerned about Beijing’s fortified islets in the South China Sea and the growing number of new anti-ship missiles, including a so-called aircraft carrier killer.

The U.S. rulers are trying to reassert their technological lead in missile defense and other weaponry. They are pressing the imperialist rulers from Japan to Australia and other capitalist powers in the Indo-Pacific region to back them as a counterweight to Beijing.

cle on the ongoing tour by Albert Woodfox promoting his book *Solitary*. He served over 40 years in solitary confinement, and is campaigning for its abolition.

Goldstein said in his appeal that the Department of Corrections cannot “ban the *Militant* because some officials disagree with the viewpoints expressed in these articles.” He noted that nothing in the article on Woodfox “so much as hints at any current prisoner taking any action whatsoever that could rationally be deemed as violent or presenting a threat to prison security.”

The ban on issue no. 17 is completely unclear. Prison officials’ notice only says: “Pages: 1,5,; Displicts [sic] protest continue in fight” and “Page: 9 Racism.”

But there are no articles in the paper headlined “protest continues in fight.” There was an article headlined “Protests Continue in Fight against Police Killing of Stephon Clark” in issue no. 12, which was banned by the same prison officials. But that ban was overturned.

Goldstein emailed the Literature Review Committee to find out which article in issue no. 17 is the reason for the ban. So far the committee hasn’t answered.

“We will fight against every impoundment. We defend the rights of our subscribers behind bars and their right to read the *Militant*,” said editor John Studer.